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IT is a vulgar notion, and worthy of the vulgar, for it is both falſe and abſurd, that paſſionate people are the beſt-natured people in the world. *They are a little haſty, it is true; a triſle will put them in a fury; and while they are in that fury, they neither know nor care what they ſay or do: but then as ſoon as it is over, they are extremely ſorry and penitent for any injury or miſchief they did.* This panegyric on theſe choleric good-natured people, when examined and ſimplified, amounts in plain common ſenſe and Engliſh to this; that they are good-natured when they are not ill-natured; and that when in their fits of rage they have ſaid or done things that have brought them to jail or the gallows, they are extremely ſorry for it. It is indeed highly probable that they are; but where is the reparation to

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thoſe whoſe reputations, limbs, or lives they have either wounded or deſtroyed? This concern comes too late, and is only for themſelves. Self-love was the cauſe of the injury, and is the only motive of the repentance.

HAD theſe furious people real good-nature, their firſt offence would be their laſt; and they would reſolve at all events never to relapſe. The moment they felt their choler riſing, they would enjoin themſelves an abſolute ſilence and inaction, and by that ſudden check rather expoſe themſelves to a momentary ridicule (which, by the way, would be followed by univerſal pplauſe) than run the leaſt riſk of being irreparably miſchievous.

I KNOW it is ſaid in their behalf, that this impulſe to wrath is conſtitutionally ſo ſudden and ſo ſtrong, that they cannot ſtifle it, even in it's birth: but experience ſhews us, that this allegation is notoriouſly falſe; for we daily obſerve that theſe ſtormy perſons both can and do lay thoſe guſts of paſſion, when awed by reſpect, reſtrained by intereſt, or intimidated by fear. The moſt outrageous furioſo does not give a looſe to his anger in preſence of his ſovereign, or his miſtreſs; nor the expectant heir in preſence of the peeviſh dotard from whom he hopes for an inheritance. The ſoliciting courtier, though perhaps under the ſtrongeſt provocations, from unjuſt delays and broken promiſes, calmly ſwallows his unavailing wrath, diſguiſes it even under ſmiles, and gently waits for more favourable moments: nor does the criminal fly in a paſſion at his judge or his jury.

THERE is then but one ſolid excuſe to be alledged in favour of theſe people; and if they will frankly urge it, I will candidly admit it, becauſe it points out it's own remedy. I mean, let them fairly confeſs themſelves mad, as they moſt unqueſtionably are: for what plea

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can thoſe who are frantic ten times a day, bring againſt ſhaving, bleeding, and a dark room, when ſo many much more harmleſs mad-men are confined in their cells at Bedlam for being mad only once in a moon? Nay, I have been aſſured by the late ingenious doctor Monro, that ſuch of his patients who were really of a good-natured diſpoſition, and who in their lucid intervals were allowed the liberty of walking about the hoſpital, would frequently, when they found the previous ſymptoms of their returning madneſs, voluntarily apply for confinement, conſcious of the miſchief which they might poſſibly do, if at liberty. If thoſe who pretend not to be mad, but who really are ſo, had the ſame fund of good-nature, they would make the ſame application to their friends, if they have any.

THERE is in the Ménagiana a very pretty ſtory of one of theſe angry gentlemen, which ſets their extravagancy in a very ridiculous light.

Two gentlemen were riding together, one of whom, who was a choleric one, happened to be mounted upon a high-mettled horſe. The horſe grew a little troubleſome, at which the rider grew very angry, and whipped and ſpurred him with great fury; to which the horſe, almoſt as wrong-headed as his maſter, replied with kicking and plunging. The companion, concerned for the danger, and aſhamed of the folly of his friend, ſaid to him coolly, *be quiet, be quiet, and ſhew yourſelf the wiſer of the two.*

THIS ſort of madneſs, for I will call it by no other name, flows from various cauſes, of which I ſhall now enumerate the moſt general.

LIGHT unballaſted heads are very apt to be overſet by every guſt, or even breeze of paſſion; they appretiato things wrong, and think every thing of importance, but what

what really is ſo: hence thoſe frequent and ſudden tranſitions from ſilly joy to ſillier anger, according as the preſent ſilly humour is gratified or thwarted. This is the never-failing characteriſtic of the uneducated vulgar, who often in the ſame half-hour, fight with fury, and ſhake hands with affection. Such heads give themſelves no time to reaſon; and if you attempt to reaſon with them, they think you rally them, and reſent the affront. They are in ſhort, over-grown children, and continue ſo in the moſt advanced age. Far be it from me to inſinuate, what ſome ill-bred authors have bluntly aſſerted, that this is in general the caſe of the faireſt part of our ſpecies, whoſe great vivacity does not always allow them time to reaſon conſequentially, but hurries them into teſtineſs upon the leaſt oppoſition to their will. But at the ſame time, with all the partiality which I have for them, and nobody can have more than I have, I muſt confeſs that in all their debates, I have much more admired the copiouſneſs of their rhetoric, than the concluſiveneſs of their logic.

People of ſtrong animal ſpirits, warm conſtitutions, and a cold genius (a moſt unfortunate and ridiculous, though common compound) are moſt iraſcible animals, and very dangerous in their wrath. They are active, puzzling, blundering, and petulantly enterprizing and perſevering. They are impatient of the leaſt contradiction, having neither arguments nor words to reply with; and the animal part of their compoſition burſts out into furious exploſions, which have often miſchievous conſequences. Nothing is too outrageous or criminal for them to ſay or do in theſe fits; but as the beginning of their frenzy is eaſy diſcoverable by their glaring eyes, inflamed countenances, and rapid motions, the company, as conſervators of the peace (which by the way,

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every man is, till the authority of a magiſtrate can be procured) ſhould forcibly ſeize theſe madmen, and confine them in the mean time, in ſome dark cloſet, vault, or coal-hole.

MEN of nice honour, without one grain of common honeſty (for ſuch there are) are wonderfully combuſtible. The honourable is to ſupport and protect the diſhoneſt part of their character. The conſciouſneſs of their guilt makes them both ſore and jealous.

THERE is another very iraſcible ſort of human animals, whoſe madneſs proceeds from pride. Theſe are generally the people, who having juſt fortunes ſufficient to live idle and uſeleſs to ſociety, create themſelves gentlemen, and are ſcrupulouſly tender of the rank and dignity which they have not. They require the more reſpect, from being conſcious that they have no right to any. They conſtrue every thing into a ſlight, aſk explanations with heat, and miſunderſtand them with fury. *Who are you? What are you? Do you know who you ſpeak to? I'll teach you to be inſolent to a gentleman,* are their daily idioms of ſpeech, which frequently end in aſſault and battery, to the great emolument of the Roundhouſe and Crown-office.

I HAVE known many young fellows, who at their firſt ſetting out in the world, or in the army, have ſimulated a paſſion which they did not feel, merely as an indication of ſpirit, which word is falſely looked upon as ſynonymous with courage. They dreſs and look fierce, ſwear enormouſly, and rage furiouſly, ſeduced by that popular word ſpirit. But I beg leave to inform theſe miſtaken young gentlemen, whoſe error I compaſſionate, that the true ſpirit of a rational being conſiſts in cool and ſteady reſolution, which can only be the reſult of reflection and virtue.